

Amendment Dated: July 21, 2003

roller contacts the transfer sheet to fix the toner image thereon upon application of heat.

3. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the zirconium compound further has a sub-diffraction peak (B) at a Bragg (2θ) angle of  $31.6\pm0.3^\circ$  when irradiated with the specific X-ray of CuK $\alpha$ , and wherein a diffraction intensity ratio (A/B) of the main diffraction peak (A) to the sub-diffraction peak (B) is from 3 to 25.

4. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the zirconium compound has an average particle diameter of from 0.2 to 4.0  $\mu\text{m}$ .

5. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the zirconium compound is subjected to an extraction treatment so as to be dispersed in ion exchanged water at a concentration of  $1.5 \times 10^{-4} \text{ g/cm}^3$ ; and wherein the ion exchanged water has a conductivity of from 5 to 20 S/cm.

6. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein a content of the zirconium compound in the toner is from 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on a total weight of the binder resin.

7. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the toner ~~includes~~ comprises a volatile component in an amount not greater than 0.1% by weight based on a total weight of the toner when measured at a temperature of from 100 to 150 °C.

Amendment Dated: July 21, 2003

8. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin the at least one of an~~ wherein said aromatic oxycarboxylic acid and a salt thereof is a 3,5-di-tertiary-butylsalicylic acid.

9. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the binder resin comprises a polyester resin in an amount of from 50 to 100 % by weight based on total weight of the binder resin, and wherein the polyester resin has an acid value of from 5 to 25 mg KOH/g.

10. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the charging is performed while contacting the charger with the image bearer.

11. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the transferring is performed while contacting the transferer with the image bearer.

12. (Currently Amended) The image forming method of Claim 1, ~~whererin~~ wherein the cleaner is a cleaning blade.

13. (Currently Amended) A toner composition comprising:

a binder resin;

a colorant; and

a zirconium compound ~~including~~ formed of zirconium and at least one compound

Amendment Dated: July 21, 2003

selected from the group consisting of an aromatic oxycarboxylic acid or, a salt thereof of an aromatic oxycarboxylic acid, and mixtures thereof;

wherein the zirconium compound having has a main diffraction peak (A) at a Bragg (2θ) angle of  $5.5 \pm 0.3^\circ$  and a diffraction intensity of from 2,000 to 15,000 cps when irradiated with a specific X-ray of CuKα.

14. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, whererin wherein the zirconium compound further has a sub-diffraction peak (B) at a Bragg (2θ) angle of  $31.6 \pm 0.3^\circ$  when irradiated with the specific X-ray of CuKα; and

wherein a diffraction intensity ratio (A/B) of the main diffraction peak (A) to the sub-diffraction peak (B) is from 3 to 25.

15. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, whererin wherein the zirconium compound has an average particle diameter of from 0.2 to 4.0  $\mu\text{m}$ .

16. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, whererin when wherein the zirconium compound is subjected to an extraction treatment so as to be dispersed in an ion exchanged water at a concentration of  $1.5 \times 10^{-4}$  g/cm<sup>3</sup>; and  
wherein the ion exchanged water has a conductivity of from 5 to 20 S/cm.

17. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, wherein a content of the zirconium compound in the toner composition is from 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on a

Amendment Dated: July 21, 2003

total weight of the binder resin.

18. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, further comprising a volatile component in an amount not greater than 0.1 % by weight based on ~~a~~ total weight of the toner when measured at a temperature of from 100 to 150 °C.

19. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, ~~whererin the at least one of an~~ wherein said aromatic oxycarboxylic acid ~~and a salt thereof is a~~ 3,5-di-tertiary-butylsalicylic acid.

20. (Currently Amended) The toner composition of Claim 13, ~~whererin~~ wherein the binder resin comprises a polyester resin in an amount of from 50 to 100 % by weight based on ~~a~~ total weight of the binder resin; and

~~wherein~~ the polyester resin has an acid value of from 5 to 25 mg KOH/g.